the government should also respect the sentiments of Hindus. Simultaneously, a road should be constructed with the help of hot mix system along with the bank of Ganga canal from Haridwar to Murad Nagar so that during the time of carrying of kanwars, the traffic could pass along the bank of Ganga river canal and loss of life and property of kanwariyas from accidents could be averted. The Kumbha fair is going to be held at Haridwar in 1998 and this occasion a large number of devotees usually gather there.

Therefore, through you I would like to urge the Central Government that State Highway from Delhi to Haridwar should be changed into four lane National Highway with hot mix system, so that, day to day accidents and traffic jam could be averted.

(ii) Need to exempt land recorded as 'Zudpi Jungle' of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra from the Provisions of Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

SHRI RAM NAIK (MUMBAI-NORTH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, some areas of Nagpur, Wardha, Garh Chiroli, Bhandara and Chanderpur districts of Vidarbha region in Maharashtra have been registered as "Zudpi Jungle' in the revenue records. The meaning of Zudpi is small bushes, uncultivable or barren land which cannot be used for any agriculture purpose. Where, there are small bushes, that land in Marathi language, is called "Zudpi jungle". Regarding implementation of Udapi land forest (conservation) Act, 1980 provisions the Maharashtra State Government and the Central Government were of the different opinions. Now and then, the State Government has been trying to keep Zudpi land out the ambit of Forest (Conservation) Act, as this land could not be called the forest.

In the seminar of Forest Ministers held on 26 August, 1996 in New Delhi, the State Minister (Forest) of Maharashtra reiterated that this Zudpi land should be kept out of the ambit of forest (Conservation) Act and until the final decision is taken the land being utilised for non afforestation purposes and the unutilized land for afforestation, should be exempted from the provisions of this Act. He, further mentioned that by giving relaxation in the existing terms and conditions of compensatory afforestation in turn of converted forest land for the purpose of non afforestation double Zudpi land should be accorded the status of Zudpi land area.

As the Govt. of India have applied the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 on this land. Many restrictions have been imposed on its utilisation. As a result of it, there has been an adverse effect on the projects like roads, mines, small dams, small reservoirs and in providing employment to the unemployed youths. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra had raised this issue in a meeting of an International Council held in New Delhi on 15th Oct. 1996.

Therefore, I demand that Government of India should make relaxations in provisions of forest (conservations) Act the land falling under the Zudpi land I without delay.

(iii) Need to allocate more funds for early completion of railway projects in Orisaa.

[English]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (DHENKANAL): There has been an inordinate delay in the completion of some railway projects in Orissa. Prominent among them are Talcher-Sambalpur and Daitari-Banspani lines. The construction of these projects was started more than two decades ago but much progress has not been made so far. Particularly, Daitari-Banspani line will not be completed by the end of the present century at the present pace of progress.

Similarly Talcher-Sambalpur Broad Gauge rail line has been under construction now. But the fund allocation made for that line is very inadequate. The line is under execution since 1984-85. Delay in the completion of the project is attributed to severe resource constraints of the Railways. Out of the estimated Rs. 352 crore, an amount of Rs. 188 crore has been spent so far. A little more than half the estimated cost has been spent in 10 years. At this rate, completion of this project will not be possible in the near future.

In view of the above, I urge upon the Minister of Railways to provide adequate funds for these lines in 1997-98 financial year so that these projects are completed expeditiously.

(iv) Need to improve Banking facilitiee in Pupri (Sitamarhi) Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (SITAMARHI): Sir, the branch of State Bank of India at Pupri under Sitamarhi district of Bihar has been working for 30 years. At pupri, the only commercial Bank is SBI some five years ago. Pupri block headquarters has been turned into subdivision headquarters. There are five blocks Sursand, Bajpatti, Nanpur, Bokhara Chorot in this sub division. Due to Governmental and commercial work the onus of the Bank has grown. Due to acute shortage of staff in the proportion to the above said branch work, the work is not being discharged in time. As a result of it, the customers have to face great difficulties. Strong room and locker room facility is not available to the customers of SBI, Pupri branch. However the proposal of strong room and locker room has already been passed in 1984 but it is lying pending with the General Manager. Being a sole commercial Bank in the city, there is a big crowed of the people. Due to limited cash, payment is not made in time. As a result of it customers have to face difficulties day to day. There is not a single nationalised Bank in the complex of Pupri bazar committee, as a result of it the customers face difficulties daily.

Therefore, I would request the Hon'ble Finance Minister that the efficiency of the said Bank would would be enhanced by according State Bank of India in Pupri branch a status of sub divisional branch. At the same time, I would also request him to meet the public aspirations by opening a new branch of the Bank in Pupri.